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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

Washington 25, D. C.

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5 November 1946

MEMORANDUM FOR: Brig. Gen. Edwin L. Sibert
Assistant Director for Operations, CIG

FROM: Russell M. Shepherd
Director, FBIS

SUBJECT: Centralized Reporting of Propaganda and Intelligence in
Foreign Radio and Press.

1. In accordance with your recent request, I have surveyed the possibility of having a central organization prepare regional and topical studies of all forms of foreign propaganda. At the present time no complete analysis is being made in Washington of the product of either the foreign radio or the foreign press. The material being received from the foreign radio and the foreign press is used principally to obtain spot intelligence. The collection of this material is centralized for radio material in the FBIS, but there is no adequate centralized handling of the foreign press. It has been proposed by representatives of the State and War Departments that the national interest would be served by having a central organization perform the following functions:

- a. Analyze foreign radio transmissions as a source of information with periodic regional reports on radio propaganda "lines".
- b. Collect all foreign press and prepare regular digests as well as special long-range reports to supplement press cables received from the field.

Analysis of Foreign Radio:

2. At the present time there is no analysis or "control" study made of the foreign radio as a source of information. In order that intelligence offices may evaluate properly the radio intercepts collected by FBIS, information should be available on transmitter characteristics, the role of different commentators, variations in broadcasts by beams, and changes in established radio propaganda trends. The staff in the best position to provide the above data for research and evaluation offices would be a group attached to the present radio collection organization familiar with radio material and its limitations.

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3. The radio analysis defined above should probably be prepared in weekly or semi-monthly regional reports. It is estimated that it will require a minimum staff of [redacted] professional and clerical personnel to undertake this assignment at an approximate annual cost of [redacted]. For the remainder of fiscal year 1947, it is doubtful whether more than \$50,000 would be expended on this project.

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Centralized Review of Foreign Press:

4. The centralized handling of the foreign press presents a more difficult problem of coordination than exists for the foreign radio. Some parts of the job must and can best be handled by State, War and Navy Department representatives in the field. Other aspects may be handled more efficiently by a central organization. The two different methods must be carefully defined to avoid unnecessary duplication. The job that could be performed most satisfactorily by a central organization is the following:

- a. Long-range special reports on public opinion or government propaganda as expressed in the press.
- b. Regular reports digesting foreign press text which contains pertinent intelligence data not included in the press cables from the field.

An important phase in the operation of centralized press collection would be the responsibility for providing guidance to the State Department's press attaches on the current Washington needs for local press material.

5. The collecting, digesting, and reporting of material in the foreign press would require a sampling of at least 600 newspapers with a minimum staff of [redacted] analysts, translators and clerks. This would cost approximately [redacted] per year for personnel alone. Since an organization of this size would take many months to develop, it would be preferable to start with a few countries (say, Russia, Russian-satellites, China and the United Kingdom) and add coverage as the need arises. Even this limited handling of the foreign press would require a sample of about 100 newspapers and a minimum staff of [redacted] people at a cost of approximately [redacted] per year.

6. The Library of Congress has offered the State Department to assist in the operation of a central press review. The Library has the most complete collection of foreign newspapers and periodicals available in Washington at the present time. This collection could be used as the raw material in the early stages of the operation and supplemented as other more difficult to obtain papers become available. The offer of the Library of Congress also includes space and a limited amount of professional assistance in organizing the activity.

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7. If it is determined that a central organization should undertake the function of preparing long-range reports based on foreign press material, it is recommended that an informal advisory committee be formed to assist the operating personnel in the shaping of this activity. This committee should consist of properly informed representatives of the War, Navy and State Departments and any other agency who may have a need for the ultimate end product.

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